GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM AND CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:920
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2003
DISCOVERY OF A STUPA
MAHBOOB ZAHEDI

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a three thousand year old stupa was discovered at Mahisdal in Sopai basin of Birbhum district of West Bengal during digging for a railway line;

(b) if so, whether this was destroyed due to careless digging;

(c) whether, earlier, the Research Department of the Archaeological Survey of India had discovered the evidence of an agricultural community at the same site; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government for proper excavation of India, antiquity?

Answer

MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN)

(a), (b) & (c) No, Sir. No three thousand years old stupa was discovered at Mahisdal in Kopai Basin of Birbhum district, West Bengal during digging for a railway line. However, the Archeological Survey of India excavated the site in 1963-64 and found there two cultural periods, viz. Period - I, representing a Chalcolithic culture (agricultural community) characterized by the finds of plain as well as painted pottery of black- and - red as well as red and black wares; microlithic tools; a flat copper celt; terracottas; bone objects; beads of semi-precious stones and steatite; bangles; and remains of huts and floors; and Period-II containing iron implements, iron slag, new buff and gray wares in addition to the continuation of the preceding traits.

(d) Since the sequence of archaeological cultures at Mahisdal has been established there is no proposal for further excavation at the site.